

...and I didn't even feel it.



*... and when Ruti moved up to "Kita Gimel" we bought her a desk and an encyclopaedia.

We are a pretty usual sort of family: 3-room flat, 2 children, secondhand car, mortgage. My husband makes quite good money. But there are payments to be made. In short, we have to budget to get by. Nevertheless, we do manage to put away a certain amount each month — at Bank Leumi. It is difficult to make it to the end of the month, but a couple of hundred one way or the other doesn't make a big difference. When Ruti moved up to "Kita Gimel", we discovered that the savings account had grown to surprising proportions. Although it's my job to keep an eye on our financial position, even I was surprised at the amount. We bought Ruti a desk, a chair, even an encyclopaedia — what doesn't one do for the children's education? And of course we opened another monthly savings account straight away. A monthly savings plan at Bank Leumi is the best thing you can do for the children's education. And not just for that. It's true, you know, people who plan for the future are regular savers.

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The students also made the pant-suit with embroidered top shown at right and the macrame headgear at left.

boast tour to help raise funds and to prove that the funds raised are being put to good use. For this year's collection, Miriam Adler, who is in charge of the fashion course, decided to do something different with a decidedly Middle Eastern influence.

The late Dr. Helen Klitner, long-time director of Seligsberg had been an avid collector of objets d'art — silverware, pottery, ceramics and clothes representative of Israel's multi-ethnic melting pot. She believed that the finer things of life could not be appreciated at a distance. She created a special atmosphere within her school, so that her students would be surrounded by the works of artists and artisans on a day-to-day basis.

Some of the items which she brought into the school were put to storage — among them, the ethnic fashions. When Miriam retrieved them from the storeroom, she realized that most of them lent themselves to modern-day adaptation. This confirmed her decision "that this year we would not base our collection on Paris or Rome." Instead, the concepts came from Bukhara, Morocco, Yemen and Georgia.

Consultations were held with the Israel Museum and with Rojy Ben Joseph. Rojy was so enthralled by the project, that she applied several designs and fabrics of her own. "The girls who did the embroidery are fantastic," she said in retrospect. "They're very professional. I would be happy to work with them at any time, especially on another project like this. They're so good that it's hard to believe that they've just finished school. If I have another opportunity to work with them, I'd like to do a collection inspired, by peace." The

Seligsberg students also did the batiks and the weaving of some of the fabrics.

THE FINISHED collection was breath-taking, and the professional models spent a longer period showing off each creation than they would normally do. They obviously enjoyed wearing the clothes as much as the audience enjoyed seeing them.

There was a proliferation of the deep dolman sleeves so characteristic of this part of the world. Caftans, galabiyas, abayas and harem-style pants suits abounded, each more exquisite than its predecessor. Especially dramatic was an Algerian-inspired evening dress with gold chain embroidery from shoulder to waist and a gold embroidered yoke, topped by a Beduin abaya piped with gold.

The loose fitting layered look which was high fashion some 18 months ago, originates from the East, and the Seligsberg students gave it a more authentic touch by using batik instead of a solid coloured cotton. Another dramatic item was a brightly striped wool poncho. Macrame was used to interesting effect as head-gear and as accessories to dresses.

Ancient Georgian embroidery was faithfully duplicated on a striking red suit featuring a bolero jacket over a wrapped skirt. The embroidery was in black, and fully stitched by hand. The original coat-dress from which the concept was taken was black with red embroidery.

Two versions were shown of the Yemenite galabya — one in the traditional black and silvery-white stripes, and another in pale olive made from Syrian satin. Both were worn over stove-pipe

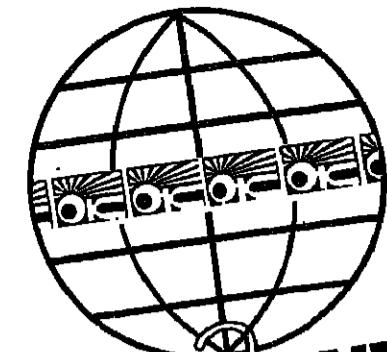
pants. The ornate gold embroidery of the Tetuan woman of Morocco was used as the basis for a print motif for a superb plum-coloured velvet pants suit, with a raglan-sleeved, hip-length jacket over straight pants.

Particularly eye-catching were pantaloons with gaily embroidered tight leggings extending from calf to ankle. Among the truly fun items were chaisty dresses in which the ankle length hemlines resembled loose diapers.

The Seligsberg collection served to explain what Rojy Ben Joseph means when she says that she would not describe her own work as ethnic. Certainly, there were undeniably ethnic overtones, but not to the extent of creating an exact replica. The successful blend of ethnic with high fashion produced an excitement which neither Paris nor Rome can arouse.

Incidentally, Rojy has not followed her heart's desire this season. While she has remained faithful to the bright colours which she loves, she is equally aware that buyers are influenced by Paris. Her colour coordinates include ultra-sexy leather-look lycra maillots teamed with wrapped seersucker skirts and short seersucker blazers. The Rikma rainbow is a burst of hot pinks, brilliant turquoise, emerald, rust, lilac and coral.

Rojy is seriously contemplating taking a year off from fashion design to concentrate on fabric design for table cloths, napkins, tea-towels and other household items. Her big ambition is to market these lines in supermarkets "so that what I make will be accessible to all women, not only those who patronize boutiques." □



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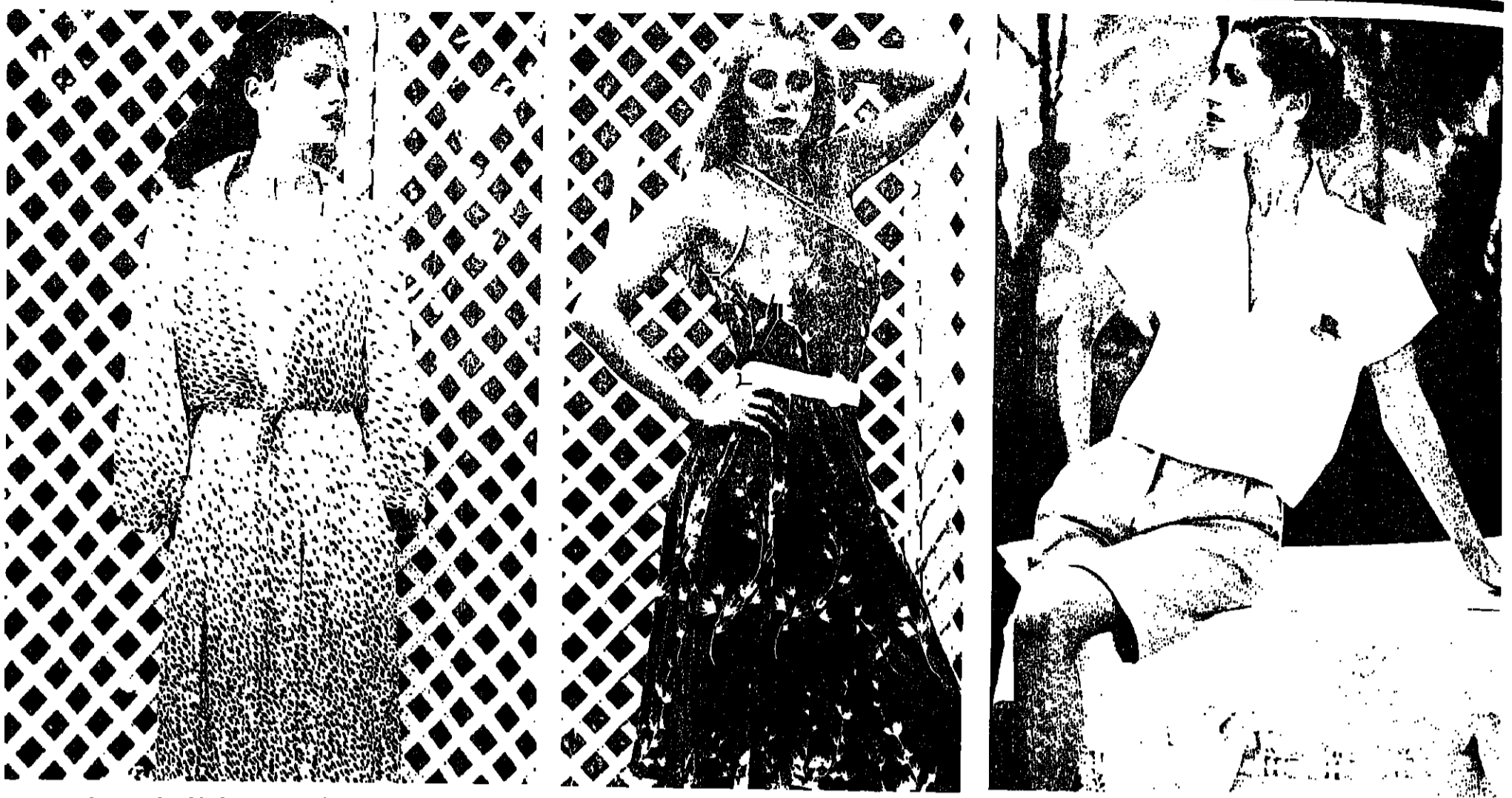
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Contrasts characterize Niba's current collection of women's fashions, as seen on cover. Shown here are polyester/knit dresses in black and white (left) and purple and white (centre). In the Young Niba line (right), white crepon blouse and banana cotton/ducron saloon shorts.

FROM SHIRTS TO HIGH FASHION

SOME TEN years ago — which is almost prehistory in the rapidly-developing Israel fashion industry — the fashion designer was considered a frivolous extravaganza by most clothing manufacturers here.

Happily, the past decade has seen a major revision in their outlook. One of the major factors in increasing designer-consciousness was the setting up of the Shenkar College of Fashion and Textiles, its fashion design department having been specifically created to supply well-qualified designers to the industry. During this period dozens of new companies have sprung up and flourished. And, most encouraging of all, the majority of the old-timers have swum with the tide.

One such old-timer is Niba. Between 1964 and 1972, the firm tried several designers and set up license agreements with both French and Italian designers, with varying degrees of success. But it took the third generation of the Baruch family, in the person of .. Israel Baruch, to take the plunge in a big way.

Seven years ago, Gideon Oberson was appointed Niba's house designer, and, together with the company's directors, he carved out a bold new fashion image for the company. Niba have given him full support and encouragement, sales have boomed, and Oberson's label is by now a major selling factor in the firm's collection and advertising campaign.

Oberson's design domain at Niba covers all stages from the choice of print, colour and fabric to the printing process, design and styling of the finished garment.

Niba originally only produced men's classic shirts but over the years the line has expanded to include men's and women's sportswear. The turning point

came in 1963, when the American department store Macy's suggested to Niba that they convert their men's shirts into women's shirtwaistlers. Today, the printed chemise dress, in numerous styling variations, is still the basis of the entire collection of a company which will almost reach the \$3m. mark in exports this year.

Oberson's strength lies in the fact that he works concurrently in four different fashion fields, each maintaining a separate image, each benefiting from his expertise in the others, and, as a combination, preventing him from ever stagnating.

Now in his mid-thirties, Gideon has concentrated on a high-priced, exclusive and cosmopolitan look ever since he



Two-piece, black and white outfit. Skirt also has red and blue highlights.

Catherine Rosenheimer

graduated from fashion school in Paris. Off-beat, ethnic, bohemian styles are just not for him — though he favours dramatic effects on occasion. He is an excellent craftsman and tailor, quick to translate the latest trends and gimmicks in colour and styling into his own designs, and working with very clean, fluid lines.

TWELVE YEARS ago, when Gideon opened his "Fashion House" producing and selling his own exclusive haute couture, mostly in imported fabrics, he was labelled a snob and an imitator of French and Italian couturiers. Meanwhile, the local fashion world, then still very unsophisticated, has caught up with him.

He still provokes the jealousy of many of his colleagues — a healthy sign, he feels — but the Fashion House has proved a success. Israeli society ladies come to him whenever they need something special, confident that his clothes are as up-to-date as anything they will find in exclusive boutiques abroad. Many tourists are amazed to find that an Oberson made-to-measure outfit costs less than half the price of the equivalent in Europe.

Three years ago, Gideon was relaxing by a swimming pool with a friend, watching the girls go by, when they started discussing the idea of manufacturing swimwear. The result was a partnership, and a very successful line of highly original bikinis and bathing-suits bearing his own signature or logo. As his own daughters grew up to become teenagers, he added a younger line of swimwear too, and last year, in conjunction with

Honigman's, started designing attractive T-shirts and vests for all ages, from toddlers through to adults.

He spends at least one full day a week at the Niba factory, overseeing the work of his design and cutting-room team there, conducting fittings and making final adjustments. After seven years as house designer with the same firm, he thinks he must have set some sort of record in the local industry, where "marriages" between designers and manufacturers are often notoriously short-lived.

The newest Niba line to be shown at the current Fashion Week is his Young Niba collection. Designed as a boutique line for chain stores, it fills a definite gap in the existing Niba



Dress with magenta and white dots on black and turquoise background.

womenswear range, which is geared to a more sophisticated customer well out of her teens. Graphic designer Dan Reisinger created the new "N" logo for the new line, which also appears on casual men's shirts.

"Young Niba" is a line of dresses and separates in bold, plain colours — a lot of black, red, purple, white and earth tones. It features shirts and shorts as well as skirts and dresses, with a lot of scroucker, both woven and knitted versions, and flat-look matt chintz cottons.

Niba's regular line of women's fashions features two entirely contrasting silhouettes. There are dresses and two-piece outfits, with the skirt straight and narrow, and the top more blousy with fullness on the shoulder line; and there are rock'n roll dresses — all part of the disco fashion scene — where the bodice is very fitted, the bust emphasized, and the skirt is a flaring cloche, reaching to just below the knee.

Many of the new shirt-dresses are cut-away sundresses, either strapless or with narrow shoulder strings, topped with shirts in the same prints, but in featherweight, transparent voile knit in contrast to the more solid polyester knit of the dress. The shirt tops are fashionably blousy, tying in a knot around the waist.

In general, the prints are light and bright in colour, featuring a lot of stylised leaf and flower patterns and many variations of dots and spots. One design looks literally like paintbrush splatter: blots of red and black on a white background. Another new and effective print is taken from a Miro painting — again, featuring red and black swirls on a white background. "By and large, the trend in prints and colours is crude rather than subtle, and very lively," says Oberson. □

Editor's box



LOOKING FORWARD to a new fashion era is always stimulating — even after 40 years of reporting the fashion scene here. Our clothing industry may be facing difficulties today, but they are nothing like the hardships that accompanied its beginnings. Of course, World War II gave the industry its first boost — with the Eastern Mediterranean cut off from the rest of the world, our Middle East neighbours turned into traffic buyers from local manufacturers.

The founding fathers of the industry are tired. And a whole new generation is taking over — and by and large doing a good job. But our clothing exports are facing stiff competition in the U.S. and in Europe. Our prices cannot possibly compete with those of Taiwan and Hongkong, where the U.S. has set up large factories geared to mass production.

Our fashion industry, in contrast, has always been geared to quality production. Original design, however, came in slowly.

WHEN FINI Lettersdorf entered the fashion scene with her first collection for Maskit, she took the lead. Her work, which has been a source of inspiration to others, and her training of so many young people, gave the industry a real uplift.

Spectacular success stories followed. Leah Gottlieb, turned Gottex into a world-famous name in swim-and-beach-wear. The firm is now expanding into sophisticated dresses as well.

Leslie Fulop of Begeed Or turned leather into high fashion all over the world. Though the firm is facing some difficulties now, its international fame should help it recover.

And Rojy Ben Joseph of Rikmah has turned dishcloth into a high-fashion material, from which she produced an original line of sportswear. So many people have tried to copy her creations. With only the mildest of success.

Last month Rojy made an enormous contribution to original design with the collection she helped create for the Hadaasah-Alise Seligberg Vocational High School. Only the Hadaasah ladies in the U.S. will get to see this collection. It should be given wider publicity. Rojy made such wonderful use of the legacy left by the late Dr. Helen Kittner, that I had the uncanny feeling Helen was sitting somewhere in the wings applauding. □

Helen Ross

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ARIELY

IN HIS OWN RIGHT

HE HAD NEVER intended to be what he describes as a "bourgeois businessman." His upbringing and the social circles in which he moved were focused on more intellectual and artistic pursuits.

He matriculated with top grades from the exclusive Rosey boarding school in Switzerland, where fellow students included sons of the Italian royal house of Savoy, the crown prince of Iran, Philip Narkos from the Greek shipping family, the sons of Elizabeth Taylor and many other siblings of wealthy and titled families.

He later studied French literature and various aspects of the arts at Harvard University in the U.S., where he graduated Magna Cum Laude. And his major passion was and is writing. He has written short stories, essays and plays for as long as he can remember. Mostly, he writes in French, but also in English and Italian. He is also fluent in German, Spanish and Hebrew.

During the years in which he was receiving a well-rounded European education, his father was building an international reputation in the world of high fashion.

His father never pressured him to join the business, but he did not hide the fact that it would please him to have his son working at his side. "I was enormously grateful for the education that he had given me, and I felt that I owed him at least a sporting chance," says the bronze-skinned, hazel-eyed young man with the long brown hair and brooding good looks. And that's how Guy Fulop became an integral part of Bege Or.

Interviewing Guy was one of those fortunate journalistic accidents that occur when one is chasing a certain kind of story, only to discover another which is better.

Last June, "Ha'aretz" ran a series of news items intimating that Bege Or was having severe financial difficulties, the upshot of



Greer Fay Cashman

which was that Leslie Fulop, founding managing director of the firm, which was established in 1958, was to be replaced by General (ros.) Baruch Harell.

Subsequently, the fashion industry was rife with rumour. There were claims that shareholders, dissatisfied with the manner in which Fulop was handling finances, had put in their own watchdog. Other sources maintained that Fulop was selling out his shares, and listed among the most likely buyers was the giant Polgat conglomerate. A former, highly-placed Bege Or employee noted that there had always been rumours of this kind circulating around the firm, but to the best of her knowledge, they were without foundation. Someone else suggested that a sale had already gone through, but that the details were being kept under wraps.

"Get the real story," said my editor. So after fishing around for a few days among the rumour mongers, I called Harell. My request for an interview met with the response, "I think you'd be wiser to talk to the boss, Mr. Fulop." "I hear he's not going to be the boss much longer," I replied. "That's not true," said

Harell, and a moment later Leslie Fulop himself was on the other end of the line. He had no objections to a story being done about Bege Or, but pointed out that he had been interviewed so many times, that it might be more interesting to interview his son Guy. "Besides," he added, "he speaks English better than I do."

We set up an appointment in Bege Or's new boutique in Tel Aviv's Dizengoff Centre. Guy was not entirely an unknown quantity. I had seen his first collection last February and, like everyone else present on that occasion, had come away very impressed. What I had not been prepared for was Guy's absolute candour, which was delightfully refreshing. He was also extremely articulate. He confessed having come to Bege Or with a series of misgivings.

His apprehension about joining the business world was primarily based on his doubts about his ability to change his lifestyle. The other disturbing factor was dealing with his identity. "All my life I was Guy, and I was scared of arriving in Israel and being Leslie Fulop's son. People would expect me to be just like him — and he's a hard man to follow."

It took about four years for Guy to make it in his own right, as I found out the following day when we continued the interview at the

factory in Migdal Ha'emek. When Leslie Fulop first came to this outlying northern development town in the mid 1950s, it was so obscure, that he couldn't find it. Today, 300 families, some of whose members are second generation workers in the firm, derive an income from Bege Or. Other factories have since opened up in the area and the town has grown. Leslie Fulop has been honoured for his pioneering and ongoing contribution to that growth.

GUY FULOP started working at Bege Or, in September 1974, without a silver spoon in his mouth. His first 4½ months were spent in the cutting room, where he had to learn, amongst other things, how to avoid waste in order to reduce the final cost of a finished garment. Over the next two years much to his chagrin, he was transferred from one department to another, without finding a place which he could specifically call his own. "I couldn't understand them, why I had to do all this," he says in retrospect, "but today I realise how incredibly important it was. That's why I'm so attached to the place and so fond of my job."

His job today is marketing manager, research and development manager, assistant to the president (Leslie Fulop) and member of the board of directors. Within the broad expanse of those titles is the development of a sophisticated export line of Bege Or handbags and the coordination of male and female export ranges, in which he also has a hand in the design.

He is firmly convinced that Bege Or's financial problems will be overcome within a year or two. He dismisses as nonsensical any thought of the Fulop family severing its relationship with the firm. The Fulops and the Israel Investment Corporation recently pumped \$0.5m. worth of share capital into the business on a 50/50 basis. "We would not put that much money into a firm if we

were intending to leave it. We didn't believe it was a profitable venture," Guy says.

In 1968, IIC became the shareholder in Bege Or, with 50 per cent of the shares remaining 50 per cent owned by Leslie Fulop. The firm subsequently bought out the government and today has 50 per cent of the nominal and 40 per cent of the shares.

The current difficulties caused by a lack of foreign investment capital were Israel pounds at a time when the lira was stable currency. Devalued by Bege Or are in all. All skins and accessories are imported.

Until 1978, dividends were out on an annual basis, with earnings about 35 times the original investment. This led to a dramatic shortage of capital, costing Bege Or 18 per cent annuum in financial expense. Total losses are estimated in the vicinity of IL20m.

Galloping inflation is pushing up the cost of production, but Bege Or cannot make seasonal price modifications. It not come to its overseas clients with a hard luck story after price has already been agreed. Added to this is the removal of government subsidies and export incentives.

Solutions called for increased capital infusion and reduced production expenses. Phase one was accomplished with limited compensating for the lack of foreign exchange. Phase two was a sacking of 250 workers and closure of six smaller factories, five of which were re-located, and the sixth, in Ramat Haim, which belongs to Bege Or.

The next logical step was distribution on the local market. An Italian architect was brought in to give a face-lift to the Bege Or boutiques ranging across the country from Carot to Eilat, and to set the tone for

birth and newest in Dizengoff Centre.

Rachel Yastrov, vice-president of the company, and for 18 years Leslie Fulop's right hand, has been made responsible for developing the taste of the Israeli market. A member of the Bege Or board of directors, she has considerable influence in shaping Bege Or's image throughout the world, and her expertise is now being utilized on the home front.

As for Harell, Guy maintains that his appointment is in line with Leslie Fulop's development plans for the firm. Business has grown tremendously in the last five years. From a middle-sized concern it has developed into a multinational enterprise with offices and boutiques on three continents, and some 4,000 clients scattered across 40 countries. In addition, Bege Or buys its raw materials from 12-15 different countries.

When Bege Or was rising to the top, competitors in the field were negligible. Staying at the top when competition is cropping up is another matter. "People expect us to be bigger and better every season," says Guy. "There was no way for my father to continue to do this alone. We split up sales and the buying of leather between us, but we still needed someone else to take charge of Israeli affairs."

Fulop Sr. had met Harell some three years earlier when he was still a colonel commanding a tank battalion in the Sinai. A keen judge of human capabilities, Fulop had offered him the managing directorship of Bege Or. Undecided about whether he wanted to continue his career in the army, Harell was reluctant to immediately commit himself to a civilian post. Fulop told him to take his time, and promised that the offer would remain open. Harell meanwhile received a promotion and opted to stay in military service for a longer time span. When he finally relinquished his khaki uniform, he took Fulop up on his offer. Although he is managing director of the company, he is not a member of the board of directors.

His presence leaves the Fulops more time to concentrate on their overseas interests. "We're the only Israeli firm selling \$1.5m worth of fashion to Italy," says Guy. "It's like selling ice to the Eskimos."

On a local level, Guy is confident that under the guidance of Rachel Yastrov, sales in 1980 will



total at least \$2m., most of which will be realized through the Bege Or chain of boutiques. Bege Or garments are also sold in other stores. The export forecast is in excess of \$10m.

Guy is proud of the fact that within the framework of the Bloomingdale's promotion of Israeli merchandises earlier, this year, his father and Leah Gottlieb of Gottex were the two people singled out for their outstanding contributions to Israel's fashion industry. Bloomingdale's, the prestigious New York department store, placed an advertisement to this effect in "The New York Times."

It took three years for Guy to accept his nomadic existence at Bege Or as a necessary evil. "It's like golf," he says. "I don't think you really enjoy it till you have a decent handicap. Having put my dreams in the fridge, I really had an impression of wasted talent."

Throughout his third and fourth years, he worked as assistant to Rachel Yastrov, learning fashion coordination. It was during this period that he was privileged to work with three designers whom he considers to be the "greatest in the world." They were Caumont, a Frenchman now working in Italy, Gianni Versace of the Italian Salon and Calvin

Klein whose name is a household word in America. "They broadened my views on fashion immensely," he says. "I wouldn't have been any of the things I am today without those people."

Bege Or, who has always worked with the best foreign designers, recently began to place greater reliance on their own resources. They stopped working with Calvin Klein because his fee became prohibitive — \$250,000 per collection.

It was approximately this time that Rachel Yastrov asked for six months leave of absence. In all her years of devoted service to Bege Or she had never taken a vacation. She had given as much as 18 hours a day of her time to the firm, commuting between Tel Aviv and Migdal Ha'emek, and Israel and other parts of the world, and she was tired. She needed a break.

Not long before, Leslie Fulop had decided to split Research and Development into two departments making her responsible for the women's line, and Guy for the men's line. When Rachel asked for leave of absence, Leslie Fulop was faced with a dilemma. It was unfair to refuse her, but he had to be sure that Guy felt enough self-confidence to take over. Guy rose to the challenge, and produced a magnificent co-ordinated collection. "I had a subjective advantage over most people," he states without any pretense of false modesty. "Having lived most of my life in Italy, Switzerland and France where beauty is the focal point of life, and mixing with people to whom taste was more important than most other things, I found my work relatively easy."

Although he can't draw, he has an extraordinary rapport with pattern-makers. He does a rough sketch which serves to explain the line he has in mind, and the pattern-makers understand him perfectly. What is more important to him is fit. Design concepts are first made up in muslin. Once he gets a muslin toile fit, he can re-adapt it to as many as 50 different styles. Last year he concentrated on two shapes — the T, a totally slim look tapering from broad shoulders; and the Y in which the tapering to the waist was gradual, and then totally straight from the waist down. The current shape is X. Shoulders are still wide, but more rounded. The garment

(Continued on page 10)

SHMATTES & SOLDIERS



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Back view of Bege Or tops shown at left.





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GOING GEOMETRICAL



At right is Mausner's 1980 triangular look, with wide-shouldered top but narrow waist. The material is 100% shiny cotton. The dresses at left, by Bennet Fashions, are of cotton and polyester with red leather belt and feature a multi-coloured print on a dark background.



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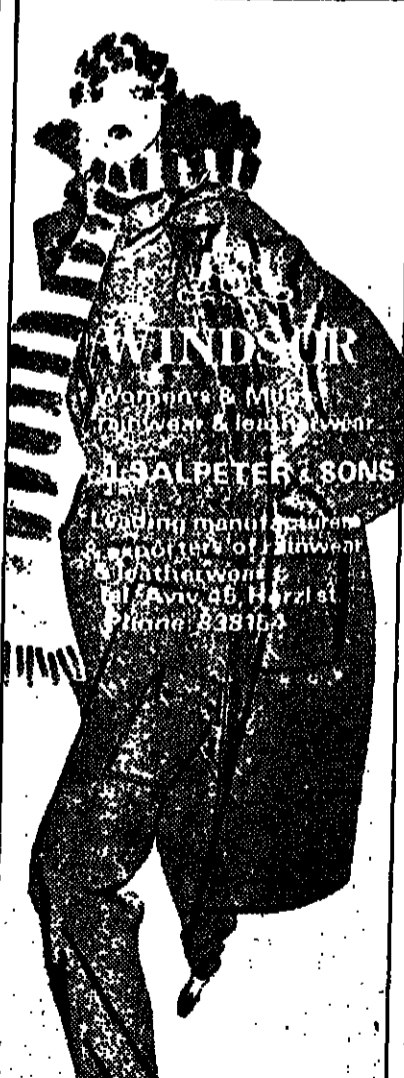
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Shabby side streets and Paris chic



Now Zedek, one of Tel Aviv's oldest quarters, now of the garment industry.

Danit Landau

THE HEART of Tel Aviv's garment district is a mosaic of shabby side streets, with dilapidated buildings that saw better days as residential premises. The Shalom Tower rises like a modern-day phoenix from the ashes of crumbling, antiquated architecture. Standing on one of the upper floors, one can look out and see the garment district spreading in all directions. Weather-beaten signboards in close proximity to each other, proclaim manufacture of high-fashion, children's wear, men's shirts, blouses, skirts, dresses, jeans, coats, sportswear... in fact almost everything which is part of the fashion scene.

Some of these firms such as Alaska, Baruch, Berger, Castro, Dominique, Indian Head, Mazette and Yanovitz, are well known on the local market and/or abroad. But there are many others whose labels one never sees in the shops. Some act as sub-contractors for larger firms and others manufacture directly for stores, using either the store label or no label at all.

Even well-known firms manufacture under labels other than their own. One becomes especially aware of this when seasonal sales are on and export surpluses begin to flood the market. One's eye is riveted to the name of a large American or European department store, and then in tiny letters, one sees the legend Made in Israel. Those who don't want to advertise the source too prominently sew the Made in Israel under the brand name, and unless one bothers to lift the top label, the Made in Israel tag is forever hidden from view.

The decrepit facades of the garment district are not always indicative of the internal state of the premises. Some manufacturers have spent a fortune on renovations — carpeted offices and showrooms; air conditioned, well-planned factory areas; and the installation of elevators. Others maintain a sweat-shop atmosphere reminiscent of the stories one hears about New York at the turn of the century. Bolts of fabric are stacked against peeling walls. Machinists, working like

local market. Her limited clientele consisted of women who travelled frequently between Israel and Europe. "They could appreciate what I was doing and they were very happy to buy clothes with a French chic in Israel."

It took more than a year for business to pick up, by which time the local market was ready for Olga, and Olga was ready to go out and conquer the world. If you haven't noticed the Karina label in your favourite boutique or department store, it's because of a deliberate policy of low volume production for the home front. "If you want to maintain some degree of exclusivity," Olga explains, "you can't mass-produce."

Although Karina's styling is Parisian, Olga tries as much as possible to work with Israeli fabrics. She resorts to imports only after having thoroughly combed local suppliers.

The retrospective impact on fashion has moved forward from the '40s to the '50s with specific emphasis on the American trends of that era. This makes Karina's output truly universal — a Moroccan designer, giving a French touch to an American style made in Israel.

For those who may not remember and who have not caught up on the latest fashion magazines, the American '50s look features wide shoulders, fitted tops, cinched waists and tube or cloche skirts falling to knee level.

KARINA'S COLLECTION, which is currently on show at Israel Spring/Summer Fashion Week at the Jerusalem Hilton, features a lot of large and small geometric prints, stripes, neon piping, op-art in black and white, blazers with slightly padded shoulders, chemisiers and overalls.

Fabrics include seersucker, knitted cottons, silk, polyester voile and terry cloth. Towelling has come a long way on the fashion rack. From bath-robes and beach cover-ups, it has progressed to street wear and even evening wear.

Last summer, Ero gave it a daring new dimension by trimming it with leather. This year, Karina and other firms have acquired a superfine terry cloth with a rich plush surface, enhanced by deep tonings such as magenta. Karina has topped terry tube skirts with loose fitting matching blazers.

The purple palette has been totally exploited this season with shades of pale lilac, lavender, amethyst, damson, heliotrope, mauve, solferino, puce et al. Pastel crepes and printed voiles predominate in Karina's evening wear range, with semidaphonous pants-suits figuring prominently.

Jose and Olga Toledano took a big risk when they turned their backs on a well-established enterprise in Morocco to make a fresh start in Israel. It's a risk that's paying off. They've found their feet in the Israeli fashion industry and they're playing an increasing role in projecting Israel's fashion image abroad.

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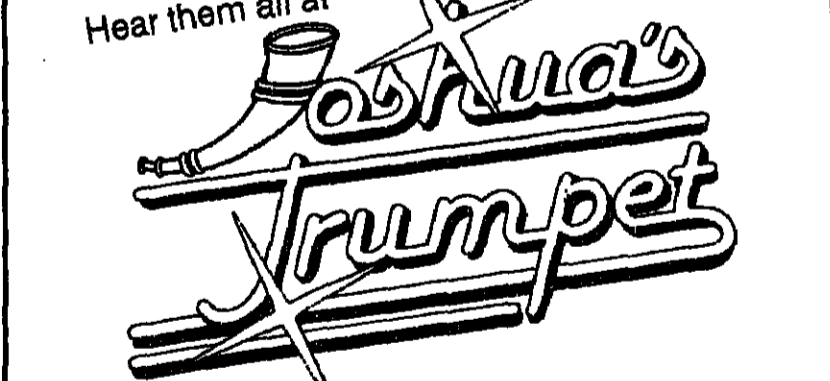
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CAN YOU WEAR RED?

What makes a woman well-dressed? Should you follow the trends? Can you wear red? Do you dress for yourself or others?

A FEW ANSWERS TO these and other questions were given to us by haute couturier Jerry Melitz. For years a successful exporter of his creations who is now concentrating on the local market, Melitz dresses some of Israel's leading public figures and celebrities as well as Ms Average Israeli who wants to look chic.

Not only chic, he corrects, but wants to express her individuality in her dress and be comfortable.

We were sitting in a spacious but cosy living room, surrounded by plants and paintings, interesting furniture pieces — an atmosphere reflecting the same ease and charm that Melitz imparts the clothes he makes.

"Fashion is a woman's best accessory. She should let her personality come through by the way she dresses, but not overwhelm."

Melitz started out designing hand-printed fabrics, which became a hit for window displays. Encouraged by Batsheva de Rothschild and Martha Graham, who was visiting the country, he produced his first collection of

outfits for the Batsheva Shop in Tel Aviv using his own hand-printed textiles. Later on he accepted commissions to design collections for individual firms and private clients which won him wide acclaim.

While he numbers among his clients some famous names here and abroad, Melitz says he likes to cater for the woman—age and proportions, no factor—who is intelligent, with whom he can have a rapport and who considers clothes important but does not take them or herself too seriously. Fashion should be fun, he emphasizes.

WHAT MAKES a woman well-dressed? "Looking smart" and feeling comfortable by wearing clothes that suit her and say what she wants to say. Taste can be cultivated for clothes as for any other art, but every woman dresses according to the message she wants to relay, even if it is "Don't pay any attention to me, now."

Who determines fashion? "There are experts and professionals, but fashion is determined by everything that happens around us and the people themselves decide. For example,

Diana Lerner

at the Prot & Porter recently, designers showed one thing; the women in the streets of Paris wore something totally different."

Should one follow the fashion trends? "One should develop a sensitivity to nuances, and get the hints being thrown out. But one does not have to follow fanatically."

What about colours? "Yellow, blue, green and red are in the simple reason that we have had



Jerry Melitz

our fill of gray and white for the past six or seven seasons. But women have always had a problem with red. They say: I don't want to depend on colour for effect; or they ask: Am I strong enough to carry it off? Can I still wear a red dress now that I am a grandmother? Will my friends think I am trying to look too young, to show off or to steal the show at their party if I wear red?

There is no yes-or-no answer because some women look vulgar in red, others look fantastic."

How do you see your role as a designer? "A designer is like an alter ego that sees the client objectively and evaluates her potentials. No woman can do that herself, because no woman sees herself objectively or knows how she looks to other people and what impact she makes. One person may actually look gorgeous but be nervous and self-conscious; another may be over-confident and think of herself as a huge success, no matter what she wears."

What sort of client drives you up the wall? "A woman who hasn't a clue of who she is and what she wants to say; a woman who comes in with fixed ideas about what is fashionable, and who won't budge from what the fashion journals dictate. But mostly, a woman without a sense of humour."

What about shopping for clothes in general? "Clothes should be fun to buy, to wear, to own and then to discard. Some women hold on too long to things that no longer say something about the person they have become. That is what not being well dressed really is."

to show off in, but to work in, visit, go to a concert or party... live in."

How do you reconcile your views with that of your customer? "There would be no point in making a woman dress only according to my view of her, if it goes against her grain."

"Some of my best friends are not my clients, because we do not see eye-to-eye. Very often someone will walk into my shop and I will refer them to another designer with whom they may have more communion. I absolutely will not sell a dress to a woman if I think it is wrong for her, no matter how much she wants to buy it."

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IN HIS OWN RIGHT

(Continued from page 11)

tapers gradually to the waist, and then out again for a full-skirted effect, very much in the '60s tradition. Garments often feature a high raglan sleeve.

In the men's line, Guy has created a wonderfully sensuous suede shirt-cum-jacket on safari-style lines. The draw string at the waist has been threaded inside instead of outside. Becoming an instant model — for which he is ideally built — Guy showed the effectiveness of this in changing shape to suit individual tastes. When the draw-string is slack, the shirt is almost straight. The draw string can be knotted on both inside facings to give a slightly or exaggerated blouson effect; and the shirt can be worn unbuttoned to give a casual macho appearance. The drawstring stays hidden. The suede is so soft and fine that it doesn't bulge or bunch

up when worn inside the belt. Guy was wearing light trousers, and when he tucked the shirt inside, his lower torso remained flat.

The new shirt collars are flatter, and smaller; and the cropped, collar-less V-necked jacket is a sure-fire winner. Among the fun items are T-shirts and short tunic tops. The fronts of the latter are made from perforated leather, and, at first glance, the effect is not unlike the chain mail worn by knights of old. All these and other designs will be repeated in non-leather fabrics in the Bege Or Bis lines created for those who want to look elegant on a budget.

The Bege Or bag factory was established some 10 years ago, primarily as an outlet for leather waste. If one goes through the cutting room of the main factory, one can see baskets attached to the ends of all the cutting

tables. All scraps are deposited in the baskets and transferred to the bag factory down the road.

Bag factory production used to be reserved for the local market, but since Guy took charge of this end of the business, production is also being geared for export. Israeli women as a rule, have a preference for large bags, which from time to time also double as shopping bags. With smaller bags increasingly coming into vogue, Guy is patiently revamping the bag factory, and getting his workers to understand exactly what he wants is not an easy task. Language is not the communication problem. It is concept. Whereas the pattern makers in the main factory have no trouble in comprehending high fashion, the situation is somewhat different in the bag factory. To try to get his point across, Guy went overseas and bought a varied collection of top-notch Italian handbags. He also ordered accessories, the quality of which he could not find in Israel. He did not copy the Italian styles, but used them as an example of fine

craftsmanship. On the day that I interviewed him, a newly completed sample range was awaiting his inspection. Pedantic, but not to the point of unreasonableness, he called in the foremen to ask why the leather had to be glued before it was stitched. The glue disturbed him because it detracted from the aesthetics of the finished product. A solution was found but not without a lot of diplomacy and debate. He wasn't entirely satisfied with certain shapes, and took great pains to explain new fashion trends and the need to follow them. He objected to some of the clasps, and produced Italian-made alternatives which were infinitely classier.

A super, chic novelty item which he is rather pleased is an oval shoulder-strap bag in perforated suede. It looks like an elegant chocolate box, and although it is smaller than the regular bag, it can hold quite a lot. Included in his immediate future plans is the creation of a Bege Or perfume. He has already commissioned one of the

leading French perfumers to concoct a special fragrance, which will probably be known as OR. The word means leather in Hebrew and gold in French... and in English expresses the difference between quality or the lack of it.

Guy Fulop is making new inroads at Bege Or and in high fashion generally. He no longer has to worry about walking in Leslie Fulop's shadow. He's doing a great job in his own right, and the father and son combination will make greater headway for Israeli fashion than ever before.

Despite having had to fire 250 employees, production levels were maintained, and more orders continue to come in from abroad. "Our name has never been as strong as it is today," says Guy. "We have no budget for public relations outside Israel, but our files have more than 50 pages of editorials from major fashion publications over the last season."

So much for gossip. Bege Or is still on its feet and intends to stay that way. □

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SPORTY SOPHISTICATION

At left is the summer 1980 look designed by Lily Davvish for Alaska. The sportswear shown at right are by Lahav and below are Nirkam's latest, designed by Shuky Levy (right) and Shlomit Fenichel.



THE SECOND GENERATION



my own childhood, I was told by Shimon that 50 per cent of production is basic, and the other 50 per cent is fashion. "There is a tendency among parents to want to dress their children in similar styles to those which they themselves are wearing, which means that we have to keep pace with every fashion innovation."

This year, for instance, in addition to the standard corduroy and canvas cloths, there are a lot of soft fabrics, because the grown-up look is soft. Where Tiferet differs radically, is in the use of synthetics. "We won't touch synthetics," states Shimon emphatically. "We use only 100 per cent cotton because it is more comfortable for children to wear, it fits better and its healthier for the body." Tiferet caters for boys and girls aged from one to 18.

Mothers complaining bitterly about the increasing cost of children's clothing will be gratified to know that Tiferet gives value for money. The painstaking quality control inspections are so meticulous, that seemingly insignificant faults, which the average buyer would probably overlook, relegate the garment to the second quality box.

A pair of corduroy overalls, perfect in every way, except for one tiny, loose stitch at the end of a seam, had been cast as not good enough for export. "We built our reputation on quality," Shimon explains, "and we're not prepared to let a loose stitch spoil that. A blemish on a garment is a blemish on our reputation."

All fabrics are laboratory tested for colour fastness and every garment is inspected throughout every phase of production. The finished product is examined again prior to packaging. On rare occasions, a faulty garment somehow finds its way into the wrong box. When this is discovered by the customer, it is replaced without argument.

THE CABILIS also pride themselves on meeting delivery deadlines. "There's no point in trying to sell if you can't deliver the goods," says Shimon. To ensure that customers get exactly what they want, he spends up to four months a year overseas. He believes that direct negotiation is more effective in achieving customer satisfaction than dealing through agents.

Shimon and Avigdor learned most of what they know about the business by working side by side with their fathers. Both of them took supplementary courses to broaden their professional knowledge.

Now that Tiferet has opened its new 1,000-metre plant, do the cousins have any further ambitions? Shimon gives that lazy Mediterranean smile which disguises a sharp business brain. "Of course we do," he says. "We want to keep on developing. We don't want to stand still. We want to grow. We want to become bigger and better, but we won't allow ourselves to go in over our heads. Quality comes first. We're guided by the standards set by our fathers, and we'll continue to increase production only if we are sure that we can continue to meet those standards."

Quoting to the young, Tiferet, with their second generation factory, produces a wide range of children's clothing. Next summer little girls will be dressed in a smart short frock and boys a two-piece that is neat and gay.

Gita Baruch

WHEN DAVID and Aris Cabill were producing clothes in Greece almost half a century ago, they little dreamed that one day they would own one of the largest manufacturing firms of children's wear in Israel.

In those days, they probably didn't give much thought to allya. But then along came World War II, and the two brothers had no option other than to close their business. They joined the Greek partisans, and somehow evaded capture by the Nazi invaders. Eventually they landed in Tel Aviv, where some 30 years ago, they established Tiferet.

Like so many success stories, this one began in a small workshop with only one sewing machine. Today, Tiferet operates two large factories employing 350 people. The second factory, which is not yet fully completed, is run by look-alike cousins Shimon and Avigdor Cabill, the sons of the original founders. Shimon is the export manager, and Avigdor the production manager.

The second factory is geared entirely to export. Tiferet's exports last year were \$2m, and Shimon anticipates a much higher figure for this year. 15 per cent of the company's production is reserved for the local market. Export outlets are the Common Market, Scandinavia and the U.S. Clientele include such well-known stores as Selfridges and D.H. Evans.

Tiferet's export branch includes a special design department, where designers Sarit Aleph and Shoshana Fel work on junior concepts of adult fashions. Commenting on some of the basic lines which hadn't changed much since

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